

Heathcote School and Science College

Normanton Park, Chingford, London, E4 6ES

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most students start school with average skills but a significant minority have lower than expected levels of reading and writing skills. They make good progress to achieve above average results overall in GCSE examinations.
- The way the school checks and reviews the quality of teaching is accurate. Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of teachers well. Professional development opportunities for staff are good and have improved teaching.
- Teaching is good and students respond well to the carefully planned lessons provided by the great majority of teachers.
- Behaviour is good. Students are polite, courteous and enjoy coming to school a great deal. Their attitudes to learning are positive and they feel safe at school.
- Attendance has improved considerably over the last three years and is now average.
- Students are looked after very well. Those who find learning difficult and those who are deaf are given support tailored to their needs.
- Additional government funding is used well to support students who need extra help. These students make good progress.
- The new sixth form is good and improving. Sixth form students make good progress from their starting points. AS-level results have improved significantly since the sixth form was established.
- School leadership is good. The headteacher is leading improvements to every part of school life with a strong vision and resolute determination. The governing body provides effective challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Work is not always challenging enough especially for the most able students.
- Achievement in modern languages and humanities is not high enough.
- Marking and feedback do not always provide students with clear enough guidance about how to improve their work. Where marking is good, students do not always act on the advice given.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 46 lessons of which eight were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to classrooms to see registration and the extended day activities.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the senior team, students, middle leaders and five members of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed the results from 104 staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and analysed data about students’ achievements, attendance and exclusions. In addition, they reviewed the school’s analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings and leaders’ observations of teaching. Inspectors looked at records related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Karen Roache	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
David Guttman	Additional Inspector
Howard Dodd	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized secondary school.
- Two fifths of students are eligible for pupil premium. This is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding allocated to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- Under one half of the students are of White British heritage, with others from a range of ethnic groups including those from Other White, Caribbean, Mixed, African and Pakistani backgrounds.
- About one in five students speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- About one in eight Year 7 students is eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium, which is provided by the government to support those students who have not previously reached the expected levels in English and mathematics.
- One student is dual registered at another school.
- The school has a specialist unit that caters for 12 deaf pupils.
- The school has specialist status in science.
- The sixth form opened in September 2011 and has grown rapidly to over 200 students.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching so that inconsistencies are eliminated and more is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that work is suitably difficult, particularly for the more able students
 - improving the consistency of marking so that all students are given clear guidance about how to improve their work
 - ensuring that students act on teachers' advice so that the quality of their work improves.
- Raise standards in modern languages and humanities by making sure that teaching in these subjects is as good as it is in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement is good. While most students start school with broadly average skills, a significant minority struggle with reading and writing. All students make good progress from their starting points to reach above average standards, especially in mathematics and science where teaching is strong.
- Based on results in their best examination courses, students' attainment has been above the national average for the past three years. In 2013, the percentage of students who gained five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including in English and mathematics, was average.
- In 2013 progress in English was similar to that in other schools in England but improvements in teaching and the curriculum since September mean that results are set to rise this year. Progress in modern languages and the humanities is slower than in other subjects as the overall quality of teaching in these subjects is less strong. Concerted action by senior leaders is starting to improve standards.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. This is because their progress is tracked effectively so that good support is provided at the right time to have an impact. This is also the case for deaf students in the hearing impaired unit.
- Students supported by the pupil premium make good progress because the school provides a wide range of academic and personal help. These students make better progress than similar students in other schools. The gap between their attainment and that of other students in the school is about one third of a GCSE grade lower in English and mathematics.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the range of support that the school provides. The 'LIT' programme, breakfast reading, the emphasis on getting boys to read and 'learn to learn' lessons are examples of how the school is raising the achievement of all pupils. The Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively.
- The most able students make good progress overall. The percentage making expected progress is higher than national figures in English and mathematics. However, not enough of these students make better than expected progress because they are not always given work that is difficult enough to challenge them.
- The achievement of students who attend local colleges is checked carefully by the school. As a result, these students' needs are met well.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.
- Standards in the sixth form are close to or above the national average and rising. In 2013, AS-level results were higher than in 2012 and all students achieved at least three A levels. Thirteen per cent of pupils who took A levels in 2013 were accepted at a range of top universities. Currently, one student has a conditional offer from Cambridge University.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers know their students well and use this knowledge to plan lessons that meet their needs effectively.
- Teaching is good in the great majority of subjects, especially in English, mathematics and science. In English results have improved because of a strong focus on checking and marking homework. This provides teachers with a clear understanding of students' progress and they act on this effectively to support individuals and push their learning forward.
- The consistency of marking and feedback to students about their work has improved appreciably since the last inspection. However, some teachers provide students with too little guidance about how to improve their work. There are some examples of very good practice, for example in design and technology, but students do not always act on teachers' advice and this slows their

progress.

- In many lessons, students are given work that inspires and motivates them. As a result, students are usually very keen to learn. In a highly successful Year 9 English lesson on writing a film review, the teacher used her very strong relationship with students to inject humour and create a sense of excitement. The analysis of the film created good opportunities for students' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
- Teaching mostly stretches all students, especially the less able and those that need extra help as well as disabled students and those who have special educational needs. However, in some lessons, the work does not challenge the most able students sufficiently because it is too easy. While these able students do well they do not achieve at the highest levels of which they are capable.
- In the sixth form, teaching is at least good and sometimes better. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects and of the expectations of the AS- and A-level examinations. As a result, they give students the knowledge and skills to be able to tackle examinations successfully.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Deaf students are integrated into mainstream classes and consequently have the same experience as other students. They receive good support from specialist teachers and teaching assistants who know them well and as a result make good progress from their starting points.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students have positive attitudes to learning. Attendance has risen consistently over the last three years so that it is now average. This improvement is the result of careful monitoring of attendance and high expectations and because the pastoral teams support vulnerable and disaffected students very effectively. Punctuality to school and to lessons is good.
- The behaviour of students is good. Students are welcoming, polite and courteous. They treat other students and adults with a great deal of respect. It is not unusual to see students congratulating others when they have been praised by their teachers.
- The strong relationships between teachers and students have a noticeable impact on behaviour. Behaviour in lessons is managed well so that learning takes place with little disruption.
- Behaviour in lessons is good because teachers manage their classes well. Occasionally, where teaching is not good and the lesson content lacks challenge, students' behaviour deteriorates a little as they lose concentration.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students have a strong understanding of safety matters, including e-safety, and state that they feel very safe in school. This is because all adults provide a high level of care for the students and are concerned for both their academic and personal achievements. The junior leadership programme and sixth form students helping younger students with their reading are examples of how the school provides opportunities for students to be involved in the school community. In discussions, students were very positive about the care and support they are given by the school.
- Students enjoy school a great deal. They state that bullying, racism and discrimination are rare and are very confident that any incidents are dealt with effectively.
- Parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were positive about the school and all felt that their children were well looked after. Some parents and carers felt that they did not receive helpful information about their child's progress but inspectors found that regular reporting and letters home were good.
- The number of students in the sixth form has risen rapidly since it was opened fully in September 2011. This is evidence of the school's rising reputation in the borough, particularly as the number of students going on to university is increasing.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher communicates high expectations and leads the school with passion, vision and energy. This is demonstrated by the drive to establish a good sixth form. She is supported well by her senior team and together they have driven forward improvements to every part of school life. This creates a strong climate for learning. One of the strengths of the leadership, and the school, is the way every student, regardless of ability, behaviour or attitude is treated as an individual with the potential to succeed. As a result students flourish and are prepared well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- The school's view of itself is accurate and based on a good range of evidence including students' work in books, the monitoring of teaching and a thorough analysis of data. As a result there are well-defined targets for improvement. Some judgements about teaching are too generous but the school's programme of professional development for middle leaders is starting to improve accuracy. Progress towards achieving these targets is checked frequently so that adjustments can be made quickly. As a result, the school's actions have a notable impact on raising students' achievements. There are carefully thought out procedures to manage the performance of teachers that are applied thoroughly.
- The school uses its pupil premium funds effectively to support students and ensure that no one falls behind. It has, for example, carried out a rigorous review of the impact of its work, identified those strategies that have worked best and drawn up recommendations for further improvement. Successful strategies have included the literacy programme, the use of higher-level teaching assistants and breakfast and homework clubs. Improvements in English and mathematics have been supported by this work. The school tracks the progress of these students very carefully and has identified those that have made the most and least progress. This is having a strong impact on students' progress.
- The range of subjects provided is wide and the transition from Year 9 to Year 10 is managed very carefully so that students study subjects that meet their needs and aspirations. The new sixth form has been particularly successful in raising aspirations and enabling the school to provide a wide range of subjects and pathways that give students opportunities to realise their potential, whether academic or vocational. This illustrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Professional development for teachers is good and has a marked impact on improving the quality of teaching and on teachers' commitment to the school and its vision. Staff responses to the questionnaire were very positive overall.
- The local authority provides light-touch support because it is rightly confident that the school's leadership is improving the outcomes for students.
- The hearing impaired unit is led successfully. Deaf students are integrated fully into to the life of the school and are supported effectively by specialist teachers and teaching assistants.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. It fulfils its role effectively, challenging and holding the school to account for students' achievement, and supporting improvement. This is because governors receive clear information about the school's performance from the senior leadership team, which they compare with local and national data. In addition, there is a programme of regular training; most recently, for example, governors have had training about how to use data. The governing body is also active in taking the initiative for moving the school forward as illustrated by a recent meeting about academy status. Governors make regular visits to the school and have a solid understanding of teaching quality and what is being done to tackle underperformance. Governors set targets for the headteacher, and know how the pupil funding is being spent and the impact this has on students' achievements.
 - The governing body ensures that the requirements for the safeguarding of students are met and that the budget is well managed.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103097
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	440977

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,151
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Moyes
Headteacher	Zoe Cozens
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 June 2011
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